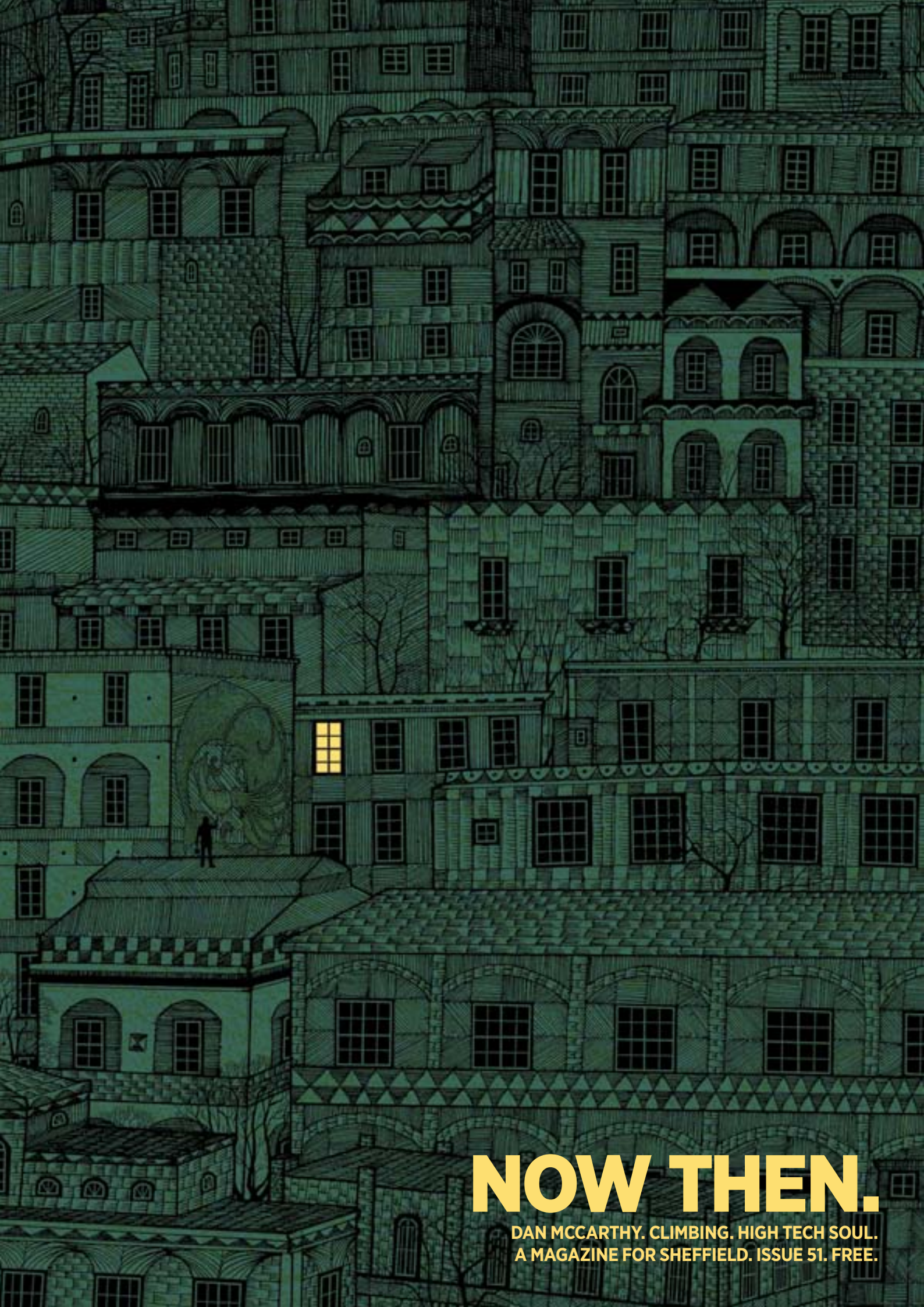




NOW THEN.

DAN MCCARTHY. CLIMBING. HIGH TECH SOUL.
A MAGAZINE FOR SHEFFIELD. ISSUE 51. FREE.

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NOW THEN IS A FREE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE IN SHEFFIELD.

We aim to cultivate choice, voice and responsibility by providing a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news. We support Sheffield's economy by only working with independent traders, community groups, charities and local government.

Almost all articles published in this magazine are written by members of the community, not professionals. If you don't like what you read or have something that needs to be said, get in touch. Your opinions make Now Then what it is.

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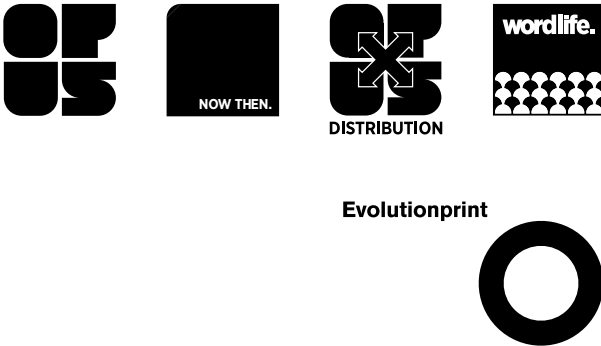
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Now Then may be unsuitable for under 18s.

Enjoy the read.



EDITORIAL.

We have some excellent articles for you this month. Alt-Sheff considers the case for cannabis decriminalisation on page 5, Ben Dorey talks about the history of climbing in Sheffield on page 9, and Ben Jackson revels in the glory of real ale on page 20. Our music feature this month sees Alex Keegan explore the links between Sheffield and Detroit.

Due to financial constraints, Now Then will be online-only for July and August. We want to be back in full force come September, so taking a summer break from print seems like a sensible choice, but don't forget that all of the usual content will be available on nowthenmagazine.com as usual. 'Like' the Now Then page on Facebook to stay up to date.

Our June art submission comes from Dan McCarthy, a US-based screen printing extraordinaire with an immediately identifiable style. Trees galore. Read an interview with Dan on page 32.

Don't forget that Peace in the Park, everyone's favourite free community festival, takes place on Saturday 9th June at Ponderosa Park. Visit web. peaceinthepark.org.uk for more details, including the full line-up. We'll be hosting the Other Stage, so see you down there.

Thanks for reading.

SAM.

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LOCALCHECK.

DECRIMINALISATION.
HOSTED BY ALT-SHEFF.

Last year the Global Commission on Drug Policy, a high-powered panel including several former heads of state, concluded that the so-called “war on drugs” has failed, and that the world should consider decriminalisation or legalisation. In April, Russell Brand appeared before the Home Affairs Select Committee’s inquiry into drugs policy, giving a heartfelt view as a former addict. He argued for a pragmatic rather than symbolic approach.

‘Being arrested isn’t a lesson - it is just an administrative blip’, he said. ‘Instead we should address the social, mental and spiritual problems that lead people to taking drugs, to bring them into society, offer them treatment and neutralise the toxic social threat that they offer as criminals trying to fund their habit.’ Wise words indeed.

Now the police are facing huge cuts, surely it’s time to consider removing drug use from the activities considered as crimes? Decriminalisation doesn’t mean allowing anything for anyone at any age. The legal age of 18 is generally accepted and legal substances from alcohol to glue are regulated pretty well. What a pity cannabis can’t be added to the list, and legalised.

Around half of us try cannabis. The law on this is seen by the general public as a big joke. Yet police helicopters disturb our sleep with infra-red searches for cannabis growing operations. There’s a whole legal conveyor belt, from teenage toker to jail-bird. Surely they’re not worried that no-one would get up for work the day after legalisation? Life would go on as normal. It’s not as if the legal drugs like alcohol cause the world to stop. Sure, alcohol is linked to depression, addiction, violence and liver disease, but even advertising it is considered socially acceptable. In fact, cannabis has been decriminalised in Portugal, Switzerland, Spain, some US states and Dutch towns. Experiments into its medicinal use are widespread and it has safely been part of human society since time immemorial.

So what would happen if cannabis was legalised? Well, for a start our children would believe us, and their school guidance, on the really dangerous drugs. Not “Just say No”, but “Just say Know”. They would be better educated. Do those in control really want that? It’s hard to appreciate if you haven’t got a foot in that world, but there can be a certain glamour in the sleazy world of crack and heroin. Dr. Gabor Maté, author and drug addiction specialist, points out that it’s generally those who have suffered early childhood trauma who turn to heavily addictive drug abuse. Sadly their friends, who are the first to see them slipping into escapist oblivion, may well say nothing to adults. Why? Probably because their first teenage street-corner experiments with any drug was with cannabis - and with them. They’re scared of getting advice precisely because cannabis is illegal. Result: the hard drug dealers cultivating new customers don’t get shopped. The massive majority of cannabis users don’t take hard drugs. In the short-sighted, tea party world of conformity Conservatism, a hypothetical link between cannabis and other drugs is the best reason to keep it illegal. In reality, it’s the best reason to legalise it.

With legalisation, a whole section of society – teachers, parents, relatives, youth workers – could suddenly start telling the truth, instead of hiding the fact that they speak from experience about cannabis. There’s plenty to discuss. The good and bad sides. There are dangers in cannabis use as with any substance; daily use is too much; giving it to others without their knowledge is never acceptable; smoking it is bad for the lungs. Without this honest discussion, there’s only misinformation and glamorisation.

Here in South Yorkshire during the recession of the 1980s the police took a deliberately easy attitude to possession of cannabis. Maybe someone at the top decided that with the tension of high unemployment, a relaxed and stoned population wasn’t such a bad idea? Perhaps society has now developed to a stage of maturity where we can consider with honesty and compassion how we treat drug use, why it happens, and whether we should lock people up for it. If you disagree with the ongoing criminalisation of the country’s favourite illegal drug, please speak out.

To avoid smoking, which is always bad for the lungs, try vaporisers, which replace burning with steam inhalation. And by the way, a witty sign in one shop warns that they don’t sell “real” drugs. Not yet.

The next meeting of the Sheffield Humanist Society will debate the case for drug legalisation at the University Arms on 6th June at 8pm, lead by Alex Martin of the University of Sheffield Atheist Society.

alt-sheff.org



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FRACKING.

FRACK OFF.
FRASER BAYES.

The coalition claimed when they entered power that this would be the greenest government ever. This is up there with the idea that Xenu brought his people to Earth 75 billion years ago in a spaceship strikingly similar to that of a 1950s jumbo jet and killed them with hydrogen bombs near a big volcano (disclaimer to any scientologists reading: I'm sorry if this offends you, but the British government does not accept you as a religious organisation and I think it is a farce, so you should probably stop reading now).

Other ludicrous claims that Cameron and Clegg asserted before the election: 'No top down reorganisation of the NHS' and the classic 'abolition of tuition fees'.

Smell the bullshit yet?

David Cameron's latest plan to make this country self sustainable in the years ahead involves an army of gas wells off the British coast near Blackpool which have to date caused two earthquakes. A body of three independent experts concluded that this method was safe in a consultation which critics have deemed insufficient. It seems incongruous that the long-term energy plan for the United Kingdom potentially involves a vast network of hundreds, if not thousands of these wells around our coastline, each of which could cause regular earthquakes.

The history of man holds many cautionary lessons for us. It is hard to ignore the notion that thousands of earthquakes off our coastline could have severe consequences for our nation's ecosystem. Numerous projections show that Britain will be in a fortunate position when facing the changes to the earth in the coming century. We should not make light of this in search of a short-term political and technological fix, risking vast and unknown dangers for future generations.

Shale gas is not the answer. Yes, it is wrong that Britain is in the thrall of Russia for much of its energy demands, but this is the failure of successive governments, not just the last or present. As a nation we are poor at planning for the decades ahead.

Germany recently voted to outlaw the building of new nuclear power plants but happily relies on France for its energy needs, which has no such qualms about being nuclear. The energy market is full of contradictions. A couple of years ago British Gas announced that their profits had increased by 100% in a year, not long after they increased prices by 33%. Such cases are manifold.

In early May, it was announced that the Obama administration was to introduce new rules which critics say do not go far enough, and in fact pander to the energy industry. Under the guidelines, companies in the US engaging in fracking will for the first time have to state what chemicals have been used in the process. This is akin to telling someone that the stuffing in the roast chicken they just ate "had a few nuts in, so have fun at the hospital".

The environmental arguments against fracking are numerous. Around 40,000 gallons of liquid is used for each hydraulic fracturing process, containing up to 600 chemicals, including numerous toxins and carcinogens. This is then pressure injected down a pipeline up to 10,000 feet below ground level, causing the shale rock to crack, creating fissures through which natural gas flows into the well. Toxic chemicals and methane gas often escape into the local water supply - methane concentrations in water are 17 times higher than average around fracking sites. Over 1,000 cases of sensory, respiratory and neurological damage have been recorded near fracking sites. Only 30-50% of the fracking fluid is recovered. The process extracts around 300,000 barrels of natural gas a day.

The greenest government ever? Far from it. That statement is yet another hollow platitude uttered for the purposes of electioneering. The British people have been subjugated by big business and this is just another example. If you truly care about the fate of the earth, don't rely on this vacuous government - be the change you want to see in the world.

Many thanks to dangersoffracking.com
for scientific documentation.



CLIMBING.

SHEFFIELD'S CENTURY-OLD TRADITION.
BEN DOREY.

Those of you who have lived around Sheffield for a while probably already know that the place is infested like no other city in the UK with a strange species of humans called climbers. You notice them in pubs and parks - scruffily dressed, gnarly looking men and women gripping invisible objects in the air as they relive their latest escapades or restlessly bouncing around bars whenever it's raining. You may have also noticed a load of rather top-heavy characters going mad at the front of Sheffield's many techno nights. What you may not be aware of is the fact that Sheffield has been at the centre of worldwide climbing culture for over a century, and that some even consider it to be the birthplace of rock climbing as a sport itself.

The Victorians loved to climb around the mountains of The Lake District and North Wales, but it was mostly considered a form of training for gentlemen's expeditions to the Alps. A Sheffield local J W Puttrell changed this in the late 19th Century when, starting in 1885 at Wharnccliffe Edge above Stocksbridge in the Don Valley, he began to develop routes on the gritstone edges that litter the hills around Sheffield. An avid adventurer both on cliffs and underground, his is a name you will find over and over in climbing and caving guidebooks detailing the local area.

Often climbing alone without a rope, and even when using one devoid of the technologies that have rendered a lot of routes relatively safe in the modern age, Puttrell's outcrop climbing games were full of risk and only the brave could succeed. Many of the deep cracks and chimneys which he scratched his way up in hobnail boots are still physical challenges to today's climbers.

The next few decades saw a gradual increase in standards, both in terms of technicality and boldness, with some notable routes such as High Neb Buttress at Stanage and the impressive Suicide Wall at Cratcliffe being put up, but the next leap forwards came with two men from the other side of the Pennines in the 1950s. Joe Brown and Don Whillans were two working class men from Britain who changed the face of climbing from the little crags of Derbyshire right up to the giants of the Himalayas, and there is no place where their legacy is more obvious than on the ribbons of the gritstone edges in the Peak. The proximity of these cliffs to the urban hubs of Sheffield and Manchester meant that days out by bus were feasible, and week in, week out these two men established new routes of unprecedented difficulty all over the area. Some of these routes - originally put up in Woolworth's plimsolls - have given me some of the most intense moments of my climbing life despite modern equipment making them far easier!

The 1970s saw another progression, as modern equipment and technical advances opened up routes on the blank walls where climbing was previously impossible. Again it was Sheffield dwellers who spearheaded the rush for new routes, with John Allen (now of student property fame) and Steve Bancroft leading. They were followed by another Yorkshireman, Ron Fawcett, who took standards to the next level with his ascents of routes like Master's Edge at Millstone Edge, officially still within Sheffield's city boundaries.

In the generation after Ron, three figures emerged in Sheffield who would go on to change climbing worldwide. Firstly there was Johnny Dawes, a wildchild kinetic genius whose experimentation with movement and mental strength enabled him to put dangerous routes up all over the Peak. Then there were Ben Moon and Jerry Moffatt, whose dedication to doing the hardest of moves meant that by the early 90s the Peak was home to the world's hardest routes and boulder problems.

Concurrent with this history of Sheffield being at the cutting edge of the sport was a growth in the numbers of people taking part, and the closeness of the Sheffield scene is one of the things that makes climbing here so special. Sheffield is the UK's centre-point for all things climbing related, and has a climbing population to rival anywhere in the world. With the opening of the Foundry and then the Edge, and more recently the Climbing Works, there are hubs of climbing activity within the city itself, where people of all abilities rub shoulders and socialise, as well as getting their fix of upwards movement on those rare rainy days in our fair city.

Since climbing is a friendly, relatively low-key sport, there is no reason to feel nervous about taking your first steps. It is not uncommon for complete beginners to get encouragement from those at the cutting edge of the sport. As a bumbling middle-grade climber, I have had the pleasure of climbing with the aforementioned Ron Fawcett and Johnny Dawes (to name but two) at Sheffield's climbing walls and nearby crags. Far from being aloof, they are just decent guys to have a cuppa with. Imagine a Sunday leaguer having a casual kick-about with Wayne Rooney and you begin to get an idea of how open and friendly a community this is.

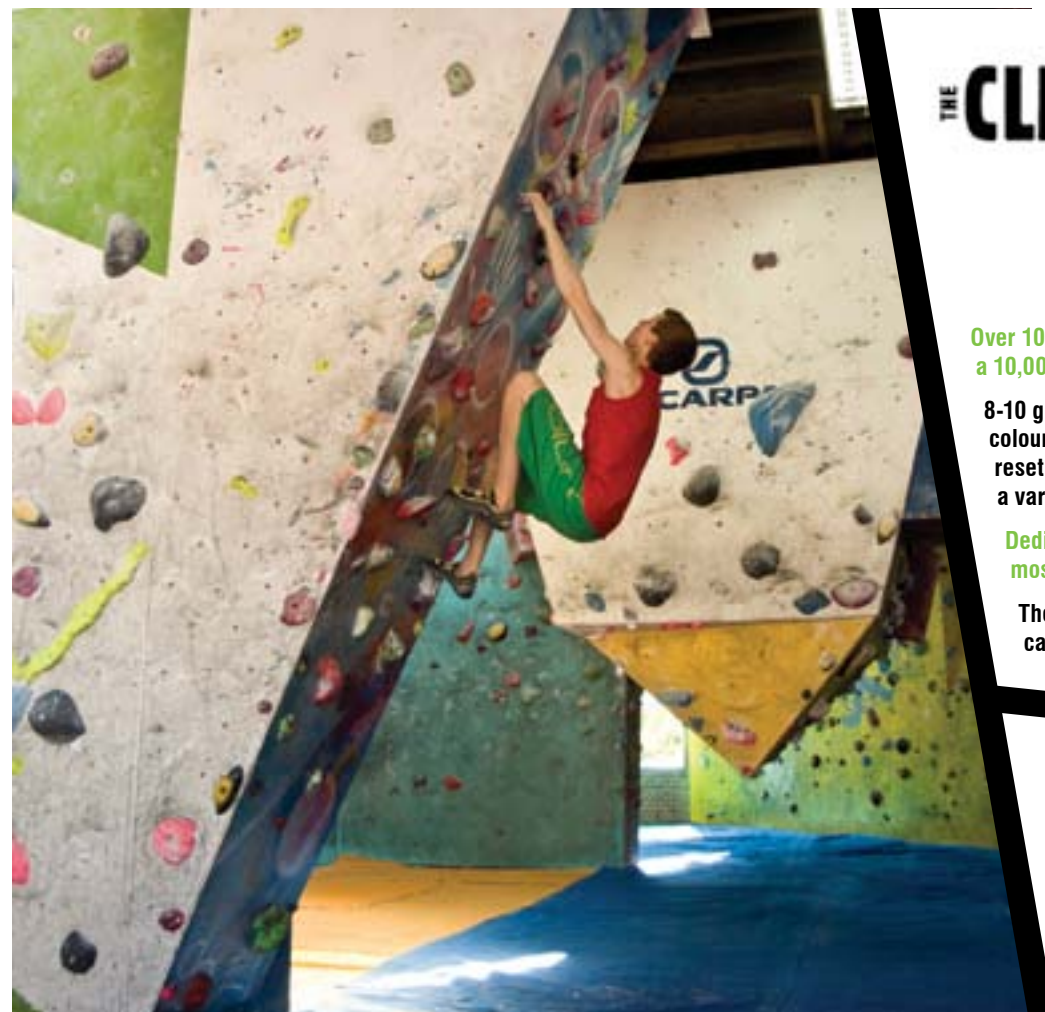
If you live in the city and haven't had a go yet, then this being Sheffield you probably know someone who can show you the ropes. Ask them to take you along. I'm sure very few climbers would object to sharing their pastime. Alternatively, get down to one of the local walls. All three of them are staffed by people whose passion is climbing, and there are myriad courses at reasonable prices that you can sign up for to learn the basics in a safe environment. It's also a great way to meet people who may just become your first partners when you step outside the wall.

For a completely absorbing mental and physical workout, there is little better than climbing. And yet there is so much more to it; whether it's discovering nooks and crannies of our local area you've never known about, finding yourself through fear and exhilaration, or simply losing touch with the humdrum world of work for a while in the strange state of meditation that simple movement induces. There is something to be said for climbing at every level and anyone can enjoy it. Add your little part to Sheffield's century-old tradition and get involved.

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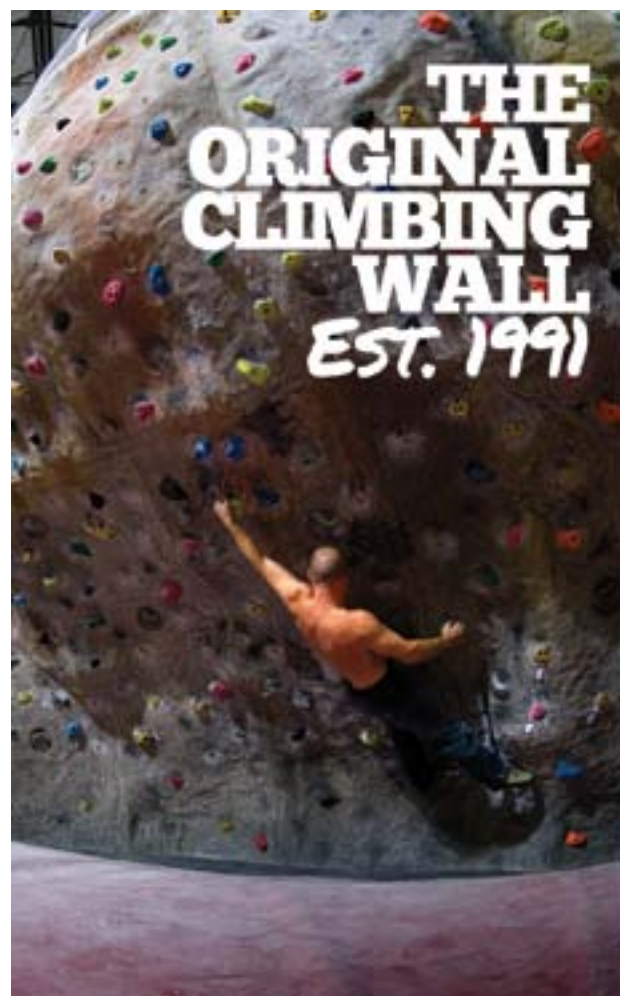
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Here in Britain, we love our bread. 99% of UK households buy it and 74% eat it at least once a day. From paratha to panetone, bagels to bara brith, bread makes up part of the diet of millions of people all over the world every day.

But these days very few people in the UK make bread at home. Our fast-paced lives and desire for convenience mean that we rarely make time to create baked goods from scratch. Whilst industrially produced bread is certainly quick and easy, there is a certain magical satisfaction to baking homemade bread and the process of kneading the dough is a great stress reliever. Of course, using a bread making machine will save you some time, but there are many simple recipes which take barely longer to make completely by hand.

Industrially produced bread is designed to keep down production costs and have a long shelf life. This means it often contains additives and excludes ingredients high in flavour and nutrition. The Real Bread Campaign promotes the value of traditionally made, artisan bakery products using natural ingredients. They believe ‘the only essential ingredients of bread are flour, water; yeast - cultured or naturally occurring (as in sourdough), though some flatbreads don’t even need yeast; and salt’. They argue for legislation to prevent the addition of artificial additives to bread without clear labeling: ‘If you add anything but salt to butter, you have to call it something else. If you add anything at all to milk, it’s no longer milk, so why does similar legal protection not apply to that other staple food: bread?’

Not only does the campaign argue for bread to be made better for us, but it also suggests that it should be made ‘better for our communities and better for the planet’. Their suggested guidelines include ensuring that bread has the FSA guideline amount of salt, that 20% of the flour should be locally milled and that it is certified organic.

If you don’t always have the time or inclination to bake at home, Sheffield has now got a number of great artisan bakeries where you can pick up a loaf, helping reduce food miles and supporting local traders. To find your local loaf, pop into Seven Hills Bakery on Sharrow Vale Road, go to Beanies for Cat Lane Bakery products or look out for smaller micro-bakeries such as Loafy on sale at farmers’ markets around the city.

Check out realbreadcampaign.org to find out more about real bread or to join the campaign.

This month also sees the launch of Grow Sheffield’s Local Food Network website (sheffieldfoodnetwork.co.uk), which allows users to locate sources of ethical, local and independent food from around the city.



PANZANELLA.

Cassie Kill.

This recipe for Italian tomato and bread salad is very simple, so good quality ingredients really shine through.

4 large tomatoes, cubed

220g of stale rustic bread, crusts removed and cubed (or toasted fresh bread)

1 ¼ cups of thinly sliced red onions

2 teaspoons of minced garlic

¼ cup of red wine vinegar (or balsamic if you want a richer flavour)

½ cup of extra virgin olive oil

Fresh basil

Salt and pepper

Combine the tomatoes, bread and onions in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the garlic, vinegar and oil to make a dressing. Pour the dressing over the bread salad and let it sit for 30 minutes at room temperature. Add the basil, season according to taste and toss to combine. Serve.



WALNUT AND SEED BREAD.

Tom Collister.

This recipe makes one large and two small loaves. The key to good bread is a warm kitchen and lots of moisture, both in the bread and in the oven while you’re cooking it. Try experimenting with different ingredients.

1kg of strong bread flour or 600g white mixed with 400g brown)

1.5 pints of warm water

2 dessert spoons of fast action yeast

1 dessert spoon of salt

2 dessert spoons of soft brown sugar

Large handful of walnuts chopped into small pieces

Larger handful of mixed seeds

Mix everything together to a sticky dough. Remove from the bowl, wash and dry the bowl and brush it with a thin layer of oil. Return it to the bowl, cover and leave for 10 minutes. Knead for 10 seconds, then cover and leave for 10 minutes. Repeat this process once, then repeat again, this time leaving for half an hour. Next, shape the dough into rolls or put into tins, cover and leave in a warm place for around an hour, until they have doubled in size.

Turn the oven on to full temperature with a flat baking tray in the bottom. Spray the loaves with a fine mist of water. When the oven is up to temperature, put the loaves in and throw half a cup of water into the tray in the bottom of the oven. The steam will help give the bread a nice thin golden crust.

After 10 minutes, turn the oven down to 220°C (gas mark 7) then leave for another 20 minutes or until the top is golden brown, then take out of the tins and place upside down on the oven shelf. Bake for a further 10 minutes to avoid overcooking the tops. These timings are for loaves. Rolls take much less time.

Take out of the tins and put on a wire rack to cool. Enjoy a thick slice, still warm and generously buttered. Call me simple, but in my mind, food doesn’t get better than that.



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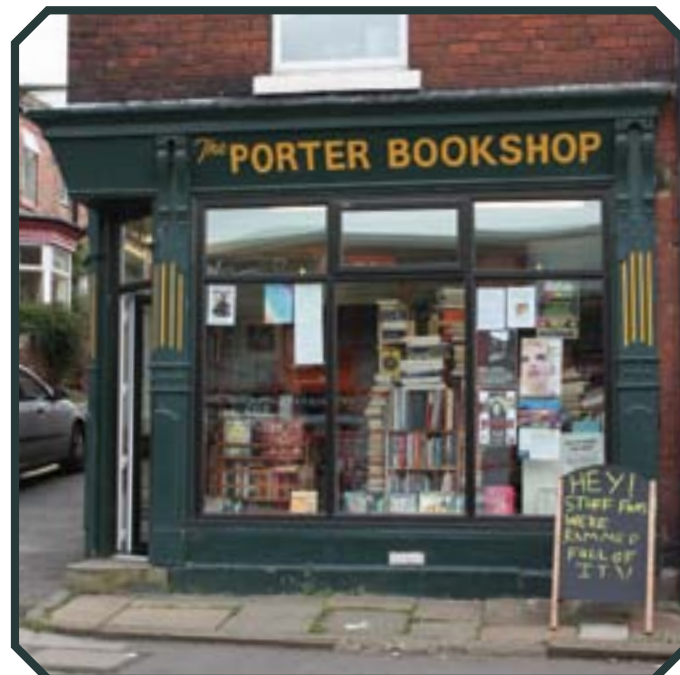
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Thanks to everyone who attended our events last month. We helped celebrate Now Then's 4th birthday at The Riverside by curating the upstairs room with a mixture of open mic acts, featured poets and a psychic comedian. We also took a bunch of poets over to Manchester to feature at one of their leading literature nights, Bad Language at the Castle Hotel. We'll be featuring them in Sheffield soon, so keep an eye out for them.

One prose piece and two poems for you to read this month. Steve Clarkson writes a mixture of poetry and prose and also writes arts features for the Metro newspaper. Kate Garrett is a BA student on the creative writing course at Sheffield Hallam. Jack Mann is a student at Sheffield Uni and one third of Sheffield-based e-zine Dead Beats Literary Blog. If you're interested in submitting or finding more info, you can find it all at wordlife.co.uk.

OFF THE SHELF LITERATURE FESTIVAL.

We're hearing rumours about their programme already, and we're reliably informed there will be another high-profile guest curator this year, alongside their usual choice selection of authors, poets and comedians. Watch this space.

AFTER HOURS.

A new collection of contemporary poetry has been released, featuring a range of great writers like Noel Williams and Donna Jones. 100% of the proceeds will go to help the Cavendish Cancer Care Centre in Sheffield. Copies are available from Lulu.com.

GORILLA EVENTS.

A new poetry slam night has joined the Sheffield literary family. They are resident at Thornbridge Brewery's Dada bar on Trippet Lane. Search on Facebook for more details.

CHANGELING.

noun

*a strange, ugly child
left in exchange for*

a beautiful, wanted child.

My mother sings, mucking out the barn.
The melody reaches me, but
She can't see her daughter.

I stare into the mare's deep brown eyes;
Nine year old thoughts forming:
"I like you, but I do not love you."

She blows warm air across my cheek.
Her coarse mane frames
Solid shoulders. Strong, even teeth

Cracked-mirror a crooked smile, while
The scents of saddle polish and grain
Swaddle the sunlit May morning.

She turns her head to nuzzle her foal.
My mother stops to gaze at them.
I stand alone, absently plaiting grass with hay.

"I love you, but I do not like you."
I turn away in the space between,
And laugh at the empty pasture.

KATE GARRETT.

THE WAITING ROOM.

How does one react to witnessing their own car crash?
The bike perpendicular to the truck,
that didn't take heed of the red traffic light.
That crunching of bones, the feel, the sound
- it was definitely you, you know it was,
your whole right side is numb
and your eyes - definitely yours -
can only see road, your crumpled bike
and your blood connecting the two.
The left side of your face feels one with the tarmac.
A metallic screech of clocks ticking
races through your body as you try to move away
from the traffic you're blocking.
While somebody checks your pulse
someone else takes your bike.
The doctor will see you now.

JACK MANN.

RUTH.

Ryan had been missing Ruth ever since their polite kiss goodbye, which had appeared to represent some sort of ending.

In their time as friends, they'd been out for dinner and sat in cafés for hours, talking about their mutual interests and the people they knew. Ryan recalled how he became lost in Ruth's company, not really seeking to impress her, or fill the conscious silences with random junk. How whenever they met at parties, which wasn't very often, they tended to sit away from the other people, where they could communicate in their own little space. She stood a good foot shorter than he, her eyes and hair were pretty similar to a lot of girls' her age, but she was perfect.

Their polite kiss goodbye had taken place on 17th June, at about 11am, outside a greasy spoon, where Ryan had just bought a bacon sandwich. They were both hungover and running late for things, and neither had anticipated that they would run into each another that morning. It felt unusually awkward and rushed. Their polite kiss goodbye lingered on his cheek that day, and for the next five years, when she was completely absent from his life.

'Make sure you put "just a thought",' advised his friend Sarah. She was a good help with these kind of things. She'd never even met Ruth. 'You don't want to scare the poor lass to death.' Ryan had a lot he wanted to say in that email. He wrote about their polite kiss goodbye, and how moving its memory was to him. He asked about her cat. He didn't know a great deal of factual information about her. He tried to express precisely what it was he loved about her, but couldn't find the words, so he simply wrote 'how I feel about you is beyond words', and said he wanted to see her again.

In a room, her room, sixty years later, Ryan opened the blinds. Ruth groaned but didn't move. He hoped she knew he was there. Speaking softly about their granddaughters, Mary and Tabitha, who were coming after school, he stroked her thin hair, and recalled her soft, perfumed skin on their wedding day.

He couldn't look after her anymore, he'd been told, and neither could anyone else in their family. So now she was here. When Ruth sat up in bed, she spat in his face, and called him another man's name. He often left the building with red cheeks that she'd slapped hard, but always with the thought that the happy lives they had shared, the many years they had given to each other, and the loving memories they had made, were worth suffering for.

STEVE CLARKSON.



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PHOTO : NATHAN GIBSON

REAL ALE.

GET SUPPING.
BEN JACKSON & JAMES LOCK.

Walking into the pub, enjoying the anticipation with a wistful and instinctive licking of the lips, I contemplate the selection of creatively designed pump clips, often carrying amusing monikers. Beers from all over the North, from little country villages to town and city breweries. There is an array of choice here and quite honestly I wouldn't mind having a little sup of them all.

Any decent barman in a real ale pub will recognise that it is choice that brings customers back. Not (anymore!) the promise of an identikit Carlsberg, probably the blandest beer in the world.

There are five pumps here, most of which are from Sheffield. Before me I have five small tasting glasses, and as I sip one after the other, evaluating which one I like best, the barman offers me his advice in the form of raised eyebrows, guttural nods and the occasional reassuring smile. I realise that variety is the spice of life and that real ale drinking is a unique experience to be sampled, savoured and enjoyed – as any craft should be.

And that is the difference in a nutshell. Real Ale is a craft. There is an art to its production that requires a human being's delicate and artistic touch, not a computer attached to a mechanical arm-filled factory. Revel in this!

Speaking of revelling, April saw the release of our inaugural Now Then Ale. If you were lucky enough to have supped one of nearly 18,000 pints we sold, we sincerely hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. The production of this beer was the logical conclusion of our odyssey into ale, with huge thanks to the artisans at Abbeydale Brewery. If you're interested in the process, we made a little video (see link below).

Ale has numerous benefits for a discerning consumer. As I said at the start of this article, the abundance of choice and variety in the world of ale puts standard keg beers to shame. Whether yours is a pale, a bitter, a stout or any shade in between, you will be spoilt for choice in most real ale houses across the city. Looking further into this you will also find that ale by its very definition is a healthier option. On average ale contains a lower ABV %, is made with no artificial ingredients, preservatives or flavourings, is rich with naturally occurring anti-oxidants, and more often than not significantly gentler on the wallet.

What is perhaps less well-known are the huge benefits to the local community. The real ale industry is comprised of smaller, more sustainable breweries and pubs, as opposed to the enforced monopoly of the big six brew companies (see 'Independent Ale' in Now Then #28), allowing for sustained growth on a manageable scale. Unsurprisingly, enter the vultures...

Sadly, like many thriving industries, the real ale trade seems to have been specifically targeted as the next successful trade to be systematically dismantled by ever increasing taxes, duties and legislative malevolence. The importance of a pub as a community hub – a place to meet, chat and share the experience of sampling some great ales – is heinously overlooked by the powers that be.

The increased duties, supposedly implemented to provide one of many quick fixes to our ailing economy, have stifled growth within the sector. With British pubs now closing at a rate of 12 per week and 9 out of 10 tenanted pubs claiming that their pub company prevents them from making a fair profit, public and trade pressure has led the Federation of Small Businesses to call on the government to commission a review of self regulation of the pub industry.

A petition by the legendary CAMRA – The Campaign for Real Ale – had by May this year already gathered 33,000 signatures. CAMRA chief executive Mike Benner said recently: “Unsustainable beer tax increases by the government are ripping the heart out of community centres. But with over 33,000 consumers having recently signed the beer tax e-petition, beer drinkers and pub goers are actively voicing their discontent.” As we've mentioned before, the average real ale drinker is unlikely to take these measures lying down. Unless very pissed.

Partly as a result of this resilient attitude and in spite of all adversity, the real ale trade remains the only growth sector within the drinks industry year-on-year as of April 2012.

So why is this? Naturally, a large factor in this growth is down to the sustainable organisational structures of the breweries involved - right across every element of the process, from the methods of production to a practiced community of sharing and independent cooperation. It is also down to community voice being heard publicly, where ministers cannot sidestep the issues.

Community Pubs Minister Bob Neil claims to have doubled small business rate relief, which gives up to 100% rate relief for small firms including pubs. “On top of this, we have abolished the last government's cider tax, are cutting red tape on live music in pubs and are stopping unfair sales of alcohol below cost price by supermarkets. We are also giving local councils new powers to introduce local business rate discounts which could support pubs which offer community facilities,” he said.

Although it is important to note that this legislation has not yet passed, it's equally important that we recognise the positive effects of proactive consumer power in getting those in their ivory towers to sit up and listen to sense.

To have your voice heard and to help a thriving trade continue to flourish, check out the links below, get the facts and take them down the pub.

Campaign for Real Ale:
camra.org.uk
Now Then Ale – The Making Of:
youtube.com/watch?v=BS2no50KFN4
Sunfest Beer Festival at The Rising Sun, 5th-8th July:
risingsunsheffield.co.uk



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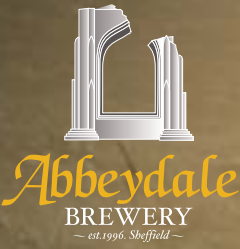
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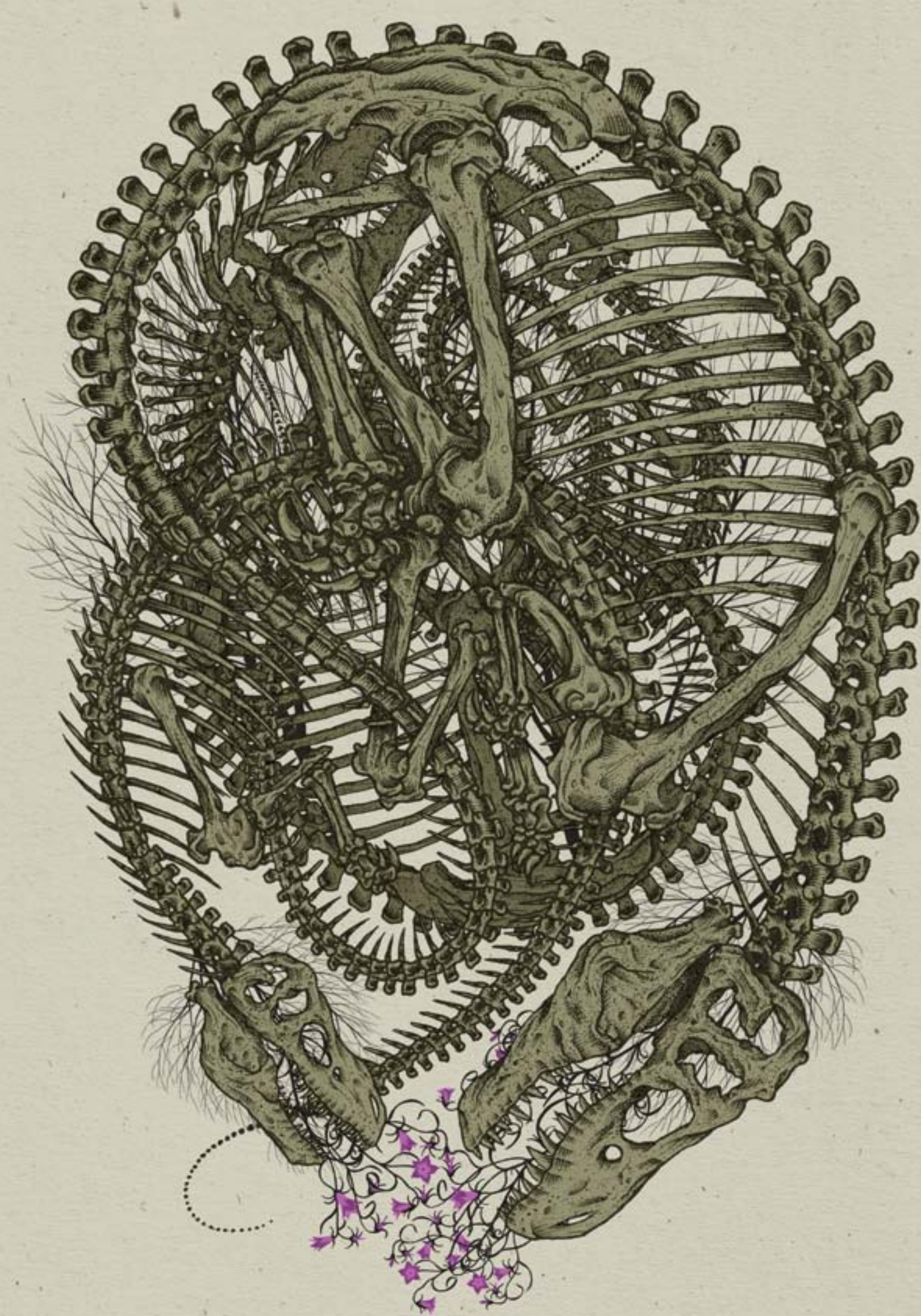
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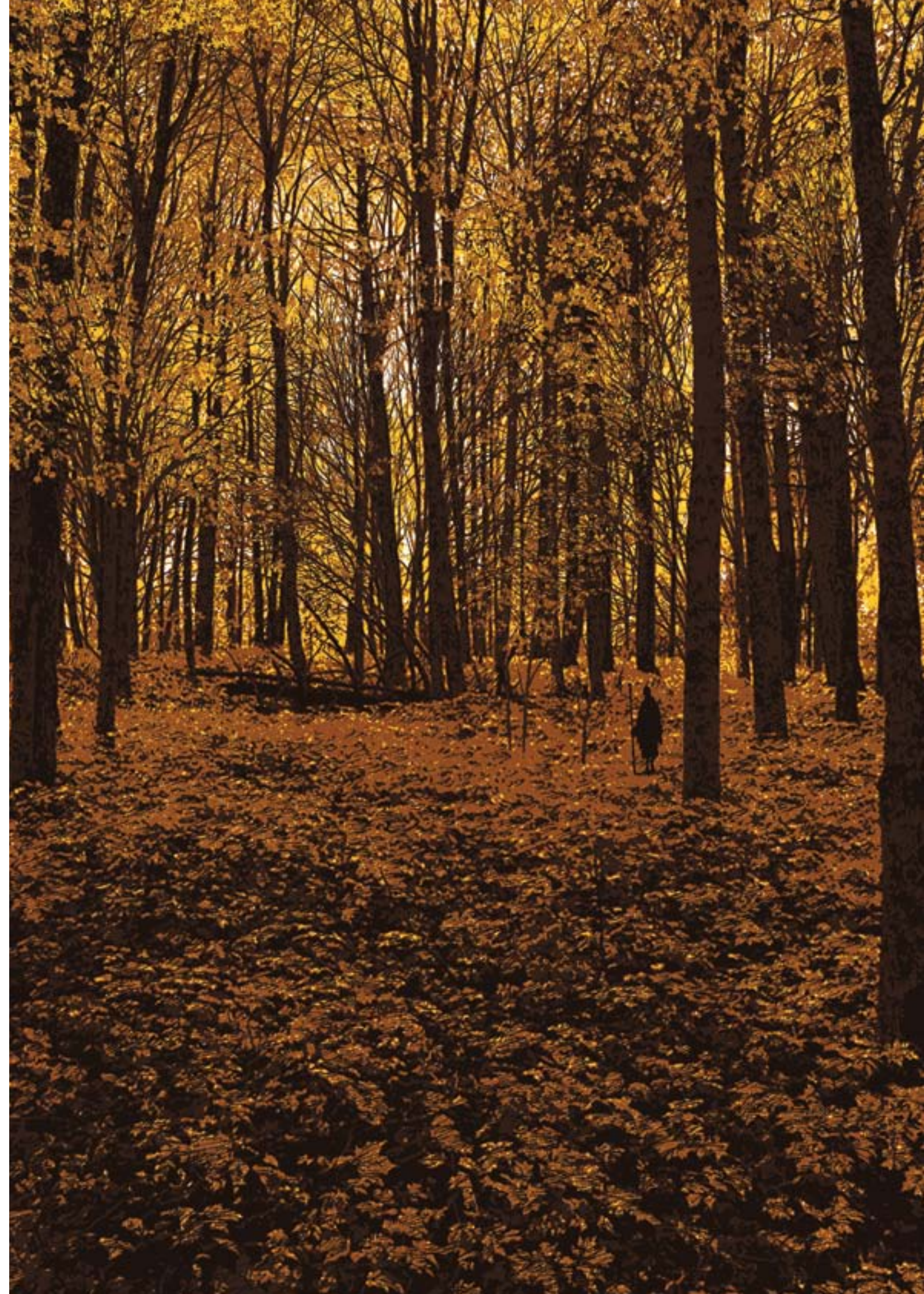
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DAN MCCARTHY.

SCREEN PRINTING EXTRAORDINAIRE.
INTERVIEW BY SAM WALBY.

Gracing our pages this month is the work of Massachusetts-based artist Dan McCarthy. Although his submissions to **Now Then** are screen prints, all of his work begins with pencil in hand, and he also often harnesses the power of the paint brush.

Dan is a prolific and driven artist, running the popular **Dan McCarthy Print Club** (more on that below) from his print shop in Falmouth MA, as well as producing screen printed posters for music and film, and T-shirts featuring his most popular designs. He recently created a poster design for TV series ‘Lost’, as well as for Paddy Considine’s newest film ‘Tyrannosaur’.

We caught up with Dan via transatlantic email to talk about his approach to art, where his inspiration comes from and why he loves screen printing so much.

What started you creating?

I’ve been drawing and painting since I was a little kid. My mother is an artist and musician, and my brother and sister and I were always doing something creative, whether it was making art or playing music. My parents have always been supportive and I feel really lucky to have that strong foundation.

Tell us about the pieces you have submitted for this issue of Now Then.

They are mostly screen prints printed on paper. The number of colours used for each print is around 4-7 and the edition sizes vary from 500-650.

How do you approach starting a new piece?

First, I need to come up with an idea that I like and that has personal meaning to me. Ideas come to me from all over place - a conversation with a friend, something I’ll hear on TV, a lyric from a song or just something I’m thinking about. I am always taking notes for potential titles or sketching out rough ideas. When the time is right to create a new piece of art, I look through my notes and usually find something that fits with how I’m feeling at that particular moment, then start drawing.

You work in a variety of different mediums – paintings, drawings, screen prints, gig posters. How do you decide which medium will best suit a specific concept for a new piece?

Most of my concepts are created to be screen printed. I choose to paint or draw when I have a gallery show on my schedule. I try to show as many original pieces as I can. I love painting and I wish I had more time to do it. Screen printing takes up most of my time. It seems like I’m always either creating the next idea or printing.

How has your work evolved over time?

Technically, I’m a better illustrator and I’m becoming more aware of how to use light and shadow. A lot of my earlier work was simpler and mostly silhouettes. Also, I am a better printer. I’ve been printing for over ten years and I feel like I learn something new each time I print. Discovering how to use translucent colors opened up a whole new realm of possibilities for me.

What is it about screen printing that appeals to you most?

The printing process is very satisfying for me. I love layering the colours one by one and it is a great feeling to put down the final colour and have a stack of finished prints. The repetition is crazy, but for some reason my brain is equipped to handle it. When I’m doing a print run, I go onto auto-pilot and my mind goes somewhere else. I come up with a lot of ideas when I’m printing. I think it helps me with the creative process.

Tell us about the Dan McCarthy Print Club.

The print club is an art print subscription. Each month I design and screen print an art print. If you join the print club you get a year’s worth of prints. I originally started it to get me motivated to make more prints. It can be hard to make time for art after college when you have a job. I thought if I could get a few people to join, I would have to commit to making 12 pieces of art. The first year was a lot of fun and I felt better having made more art, so I decided to do another year.

I’m in the middle of the eighth year of doing it and I’m really happy it’s still working out. It’s amazing to me that people join not knowing exactly what they are going to get. It’s a good feeling knowing that people have faith that I will create something they will like (most of the time). I feel like I’m on a journey, letting the art take me wherever it wants to. It’s cool to have others on the journey with me.

What other artistic media are important to you as an artist?

I love music. I’ve been playing drums (and some guitar) for most of my life. Making and listening to music is very important to me. I also love movies – science fiction in particular.

How do you spend your days?

I wake up around 7am when my two year old son jumps on my back. I drink coffee and hang out at home with my wife and boy until around 10, then I go to my print shop. When I’m there, I’m either working on a new design, printing, shipping out orders or answering emails. I get home around 5, eat dinner and take it easy for the rest of the night (watch TV/movie/video game).

What subject or theme do you return to most in your work?

I like to explore the cyclical nature of life and death and rebirth. I think that will be a recurring theme for the rest of my career.

What are you working on at the moment?

I have a gallery show coming up in July at Gallery 1988 in Los Angeles, so I’m working on some new paintings. I have about 30 done so far and I’m hoping to have around 50. I work best under pressure. I’m also getting ready to print my latest design ‘Run Rabbit Run’. It’s an eight-colour print, so I’m getting ready to burn eight screens.

When did you become self-employed and what advice do you have for aspiring artists looking to carve out a career in art?

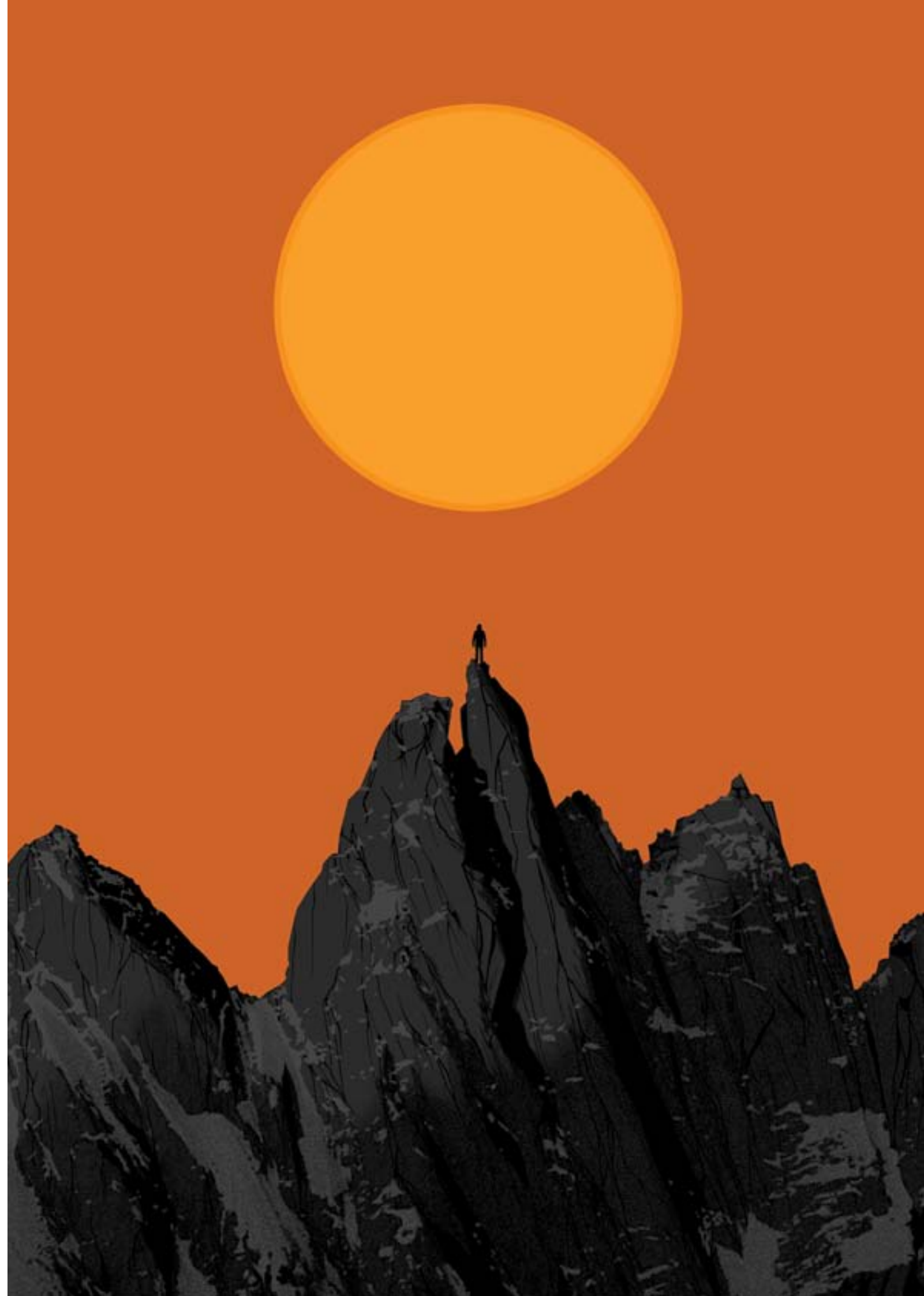
I worked as a graphic designer in Boston for about four years. I lost my job in 2004 and did everything I could to not have to get a new job. Thankfully, I was able to pay rent by selling prints and taking some freelance work. It seemed like the more work I created, the more opportunities would come to me.

I would tell an aspiring artist to create a presence on the web, whether it’s a website or just on Facebook. It’s so easy to share your art with the world and you never know what opportunities can come your way.

Good advice you wish you’d been told earlier?

Disconnect the internet at least four hours a day.

danmccarthy.org



SOUND.

THE VINYL STRAW.
JACK SCOURFIELD.

If you're within easy reach of any kind of low-resolution image of an animal/celebrity/religious figure with a sarcastic 'COOL STORY, BRO' pasted over it, I'd strongly recommend having it at the ready.

I was once making my way back from seeing Chicago house legends Virgo Four play at a club in London, but just as I'd settled in to my seat on the upper-deck of the night bus with the vehicle about to pull away, a flutter of taps peppered the window downstairs and we duly came to a premature, jolting stop, the doors hissing as they re-opened to welcome the stragglers on board.

The hastily and purposefully arranged scowl of contempt that I shot at the stairwell in readiness as the stragglers were heard to plod upstairs was shattered in an instant, as leading the procession was none other than house and techno pioneer Theo Parrish. He sat himself down a few seats behind me, and throughout the course of the journey could be heard to grumble about anything and everything, from music, to cafes, to architecture, to traffic. This continued until I hopped off at Liverpool Street Station, leaving Theo and the N35 to trundle on through Shoreditch and Hackney, during which time I'd imagine the grumbling intensified ten-fold.

Cool story, right bro? Admittedly, this is an anecdote that barely conjures up a condescendingly polite raise of the eyebrows coupled with a stifled yawn when told down the pub, and as such really shouldn't find itself shaping the introduction to an article in a city-wide magazine. However on this occasion, it's (more or less) justified. Theo Parrish is a man who likes to grumble, and one of his favourite gripes concerns the art of DJing, and above all the use of vinyl in said art. 'I'm not comfortable with convenience replacing artistry,' says Parrish in an online video feature for Slices – an interview he presumably pirouetted to, rather than face the ignominy of travelling in ease on public transport. DJs who use Serato, CDJs, or any other equipment that isn't straight up SL-1200s, a mixer and a huge mountain of wax do so because they 'didn't dedicate themselves to finding the records, or they're too lazy'. Theo's not comfortable with that.

Wanna know what Theo is comfortable with? Well, lugging four cases of vinyl - as well as his own mixer - to each gig, according to the video's voiceover. All this trouble and effort just so that he can connect with his revelers using the purest musical form possible.

Undeniably admirable, right? It would be, if Parrish wasn't such a sneering snob towards anyone who saves themselves time, money and back strain by not carting round industrial amounts of acetate for every gig. Certainly, there is no denying the quality and charm of both the sound and sight of a record spinning on a turntable, but to date a 320kbps MP3 or FLAC digital audio file hasn't reduced me to my knees, desperately clutching at my ears and wailing, "NOOOO, PLEASE LORD MAKE IT STOP!", and I see no reason why a disc jockey on the move shouldn't pack his bag with a laptop full of these instead of a stack of weighty vinyl. Seemingly the only thing that Parrish finds "lazy" about such behaviour is the physical element, as if having arrived at the venue in a sweaty, panting mess will somehow elevate the crowd's delirium to unprecedented levels.

There is something to be said for technology detracting from the more skilful side of DJing. 'Art is not supposed to be easy', Parrish states in another recent interview for celebrated photographer Rankin's Hunger magazine. Many CDJ and laptop technologies these days come complete with auto-beatmatching functions, which go some way to making a finely trained ear and a keen technical knowledge almost redundant as mixing two tracks can be visualized in front of your very eyes, instead of woven together as the strands cross within your ears and meet on the peripheries of the subconscious. However, whilst the seamlessness of a set is important in maintaining flow and continuity, any good crowd will always favour top selection over pinpoint accurate blends. Any DJ who turns up and plays a set of well-chosen, considered tracks will always go down infinitely better than one who strings together an hour of easy-to-mix non-starters. As Parrish rightly points out in the Slices feature, 'now the artist is somewhat being forgotten because everyone forgot about the records themselves and is worried about the mixing – and that's more about the ego'.

Vinyl is now largely seen as the last bastion of music in its purest, most organic form, and allows an artist a last remaining chance of identity amongst the thousands of MP3s that flood the web each and every day, but it is important to embrace the ways that new technologies can exist alongside the traditional mediums. Not doing so makes for a very tiresome early morning bus journey indeed.

COOL BEANS.

4TH MAY.
SHEFFIELD STUDENTS’ UNION.

REVIEWER – EBONY NEMBHARD.

Beginning life as a freeform club night at the Raynor Lounge back in October 2010, Cool Beans have since hosted acts from throughout the country in the form of DJs, comedy, live art and performance. The event aims, in the words of organiser Chris Arnold, to ‘play music that you might not usually hear in a club’.

Resident DJ and alter-ego of the brains behind the event Arnivore eased the crowd into the flow of the night, followed by the first live act to grace the stage, Sheffield five-piece Smiling Ivy.

Tipped as one of Sheffield’s break-through acts, Smiling Ivy make music that comes alive with the presence of a crowd. A firm local favourite, the band played a compilation of tracks, including some from their most recent EP **Party Shop Cartel**. Apparently plans are afoot for new releases this summer.

Four-piece Manchester band Jeramiah Ferrari also impressed. Having introduced their reggae punk fusion at Tramlines last year, they were promoting the release of their latest single ‘Mindless Riots’, a somewhat political statement which seemed to encapsulate the event.

Musical interludes followed, with Arnivore being joined by The Legitimate Gentlemen. Sporting the self-proclaimed title of ‘electro-swing persuasion’, the house beats entwined with trumpet and sax eventually made way for headline act The Correspondents, who played tracks from their forthcoming EP after a 14-month absence from Sheffield.

Appearing on the Telegraph’s Top Ten Highlights of Glasto two years in a row, these guys are known for their eclectic sound and insane live performances, drawing influence from jazz, 60s beat, dub and drum ‘n’ bass. There’s something nostalgic and familiar yet vibrant about their sound.

Shepdog lived up to his mission statement of providing ‘righteous party vibes’, bringing the night to a close with a selection of popular favourites.

Cool Beans is undoubtedly a night for dancing, a night for laughs and a night with an atmosphere and line-up that would be as much at home in open grassy fields as it was in Sheffield Students’ Union.

The next Cool Beans event will be a Peace in the Park fundraiser at The Red House on 4th June.

STI.

12TH MAY.
FEZ CLUB.

REVIEWER - JOHN GILLETT.

With the bar being raised substantially in the past few months by the likes of Collect, Drumro[ll] and Cargo bringing some of the most talented artists in underground house and techno to our city, I wasn’t surprised when Sheffield Techno Institute (STI) stepped up with their biggest booking yet @ the Fez club on Saturday 12th May.

Luke Slater has been peddling techno all over the place since the early nineties. Not much has changed. Over the years he’s released tracks as Planetary Assault Systems, The 7th Plain, Clementine and L.B Dub Corp. As PAS, his two most recent albums on Berlin-based label Ostgut Ton have gone down a treat. Check out ‘Temporary Suspension’ and ‘The Messenger.’

I’d been looking forward to this night since they released the line-up. With support from Nottingham’s Ed Horsley and STI’s residents Terry Dragatis, Cellar Dweller and Randy Lahey, I knew the music would be right up my techno alley.

Congratulations has to go to soundsystem wizard James Foulkes, with his Martin Audio rig set up to exactly compliment the style of music, it was one of the most well-defined I’d heard in some time. Warm bass tones were ever present, whilst punchy kicks, crisp hats and snares were never drowned out.

Slater’s extended five-deck set had obvious Berlin influence. The loops were tough and relentless but with a funky tinge and the music was always building and progressing even when you thought there was nowhere else he could take it. The mixing, as you’d expect, was flawless, and the track selection and timing got everyone bouncing about.

With the friendly crowd that the scene in this city is so famous for, there was a nice vibe in the intimate setting of Fez, the club was full enough to create the party atmosphere but there was enough space to have a boogie and not feel claustrophobic. I had a great time. Anyone who’s into this kind of music has to be feeling excited right now about what’s happening in Sheffield. The likes of Leeds and Manchester should be worried.

SAINT ETIENNE.

22ND MAY.
LEADMILL.

REVIEWER - TALIE EIGELAND.

Interesting choice of support. Rumer is better known than Saint Etienne, and the two acts have very little, if anything at all, in common. Originally from Pakistan, Sarah Joyce a.k.a. Rumer’s voice is all but obnoxious. Oh, what a tone that girl has on her. Navigating somewhere between jazz and soul, she’s backed up by a pianist, drummer and guitarist with a fine moustache. Apparently she was on Jools Holland recently. The venue isn’t too full yet, because everyone’s busy lounging around in the bar area, though they’re all a bit tipsier on overpriced cans of Red Stripe than you’d expect. Classy.

Saint Etienne. Quite hyped once again as of fairly recently, even though this is their eighth album since 1990. The name comes from a French football team based somewhere in the depths of the Loire. This is where all the modern music comes from - electronic dance-pop featuring two dudes fiddling with buttons making it all happen, a somewhat reclusive guitarist, a blonde lead singer and a backing vocalist for your harmonic and percussive enjoyment. Sarah, our girl, is very charismatic but also quite ill on this first night of their 2012 tour, so she’s chewing on some throat thingamabobs and sipping some ‘medicinal G&T’. They’ve got proper haircuts - as opposed to scruffy fringe-in-face rats’ tails - a white feather boa and a dazzling quantity of sequins.

As the set goes on, Saint Etienne play more and more of their new material. “It’s like you’re guinea pigs,” they say. The group is clearly one big family and they tell us we’re going to grow to like the new album, **Words and Music by Saint Etienne**, just released and indeed rather a contrast with their previous songs, the last of which emerged back in 2005. The people at the front seem to have memorized the band’s entire discography, while the rest look a bit non-plussed, as though this wasn’t quite what they left the house for. Sarah is both talented and charming. It’s just a shame her microphone never got removed from its stand.

WHAT’S ON.

HOSTED BY COOL BEANS.

Summer 2012 is officially here and the air is filled with opportunity and prosperity. Which mid-year delights lay in front of you all? Love? Fame? Wealth? Happiness? Personally, here at Cool Beans we’re hoping for a sudden resurgence in popularity of those Furby toys. Now they really were a good time.

CAPTIVES ON THE CAROUSEL EP LAUNCH.

4th June / The Riverside / Free.

Sheffield duo Captives on the Carousel launch their new EP **The Garden** down at The Riverside. Loads of performers, including Robert George Saull, Helen Mort and the Captives themselves. 4pm while 9pm. BBQ if sunny.

VIBES AND STUFF.

7th June / The Harley / £2 adv, £3 OTD.

The dearly missed Vibes and Stuff returns to its spiritual home this month. Residents Miggy Manacles & Zeeni are joined by the fine Thirsty Ear DJs. Expect hip hop, reggae, soul, funk and other such goodness.

PEACE IN THE PARK.

9th June / Ponderosa Park / Free.

The “no-brainer of the year” has surely got to be whether you attend Peace in the Park down in the peaceful Ponderosa Park. Independent, charitable and tons of fun, this year is looking like the best yet.

THE RECORD HOP.

15th June / The Washington / Free.

Vintage rock ‘n’ roll, garage, country, hillbilly hop, surf and soul can all be heard at the monthly Record Hop party, hosted by Miss Sophie Toes and Mr Chris Hop. Wax on, dance off!

GOJIRA.

25th June / Corporation / £14 adv.

French heavy metal anyone? The environmentally-conscious Gojira blend progressive, death and thrash metal to create a unique sound. Catch them swinging by Corp on their latest tour.

ROAMING SON.

29th June / Shakespeares / £3 OTD.

After almost being re-opened for a whole year, it’s great to see Shakespeares going so strong. The fantastic Roaming Son headline this evening, with support from Rock Melon and Andrew Oxley.

LIFE DRAWING.

Every Friday in June / Millennium Gallery / £6 OTD.

If there was one pastime to take up in the summer time, it’s life drawing - modelling or sketching - and Museums Sheffield are happy to offer just that. Kick off your weekend in style.



EL-P.

CANCER FOR CURE.
FAT POSSUM RECORDS.

REVIEWER – SAM WALBY.

Cancer For Cure is the newest effort by Brooklyn-based rapper and producer El-P, the follow-up to his much lauded **I'll Sleep When You're Dead**. Formerly a member of seminal hip hop collective Company Flow – whose trailblazing 1997 record **Funcrusher Plus** is an undeniable cornerstone of underground hip hop – El-P has always been a man of many talents and many influences, and once again he puts the ears to the test with an album that only he could have created.

For the unacquainted, El-P's music is not adequately covered by the term 'hip hop'. His productions have as much in common with rock, metal, electronica and industrial, as evidenced by the sheer variety of his samples, the rage his voice harnesses, and by his 2007 collaborations with Nine Inch Nails and The Mars Volta. Classic hip hop stabs are merged with fuzzy distortion and meaty drums to create a volatile, experimental backing for his anarchic rapping. As with other El-P albums, this one takes a bit of work on the part of the listener, but once it gets its teeth in it won't let you go.

'Request Denied' kicks in with a rolling drum break, layers of analogue synth and a distorted guitar. It's over three minutes before the rapping begins, but when it does it keeps pace stunningly, showing that this is a rapper who still has plenty to say and the attitude to carry it. Fans will recognise his trademark dystopian bile on every track, but in particular on the fantastic 'Drones Over Bklyn' and the angular 'Oh Hail No'. First single 'The Full Retard' is hard hitting, built around a compulsive vocal hook and a catchy lead. Closing track '\$ Vic/FTL (Me and You)' is probably the best example on this album of how far El-P strays from the hip hop template while still keeping the same syncopated swagger.

My only real criticism of Cancer For Cure is that while it is consistent, it isn't hugely different from his previous albums in terms of lyrical content and musical thrust. That's not to say there aren't loads of pleasant (and not so pleasant) surprises; just that fans could feel like he hasn't stepped out of the comfort zone as much as he might have.

Despite his obvious love of conspiracy theories, on this album El-P manages to stay just the right side of paranoid, and in a world that is coming ever closee to some of the dystopias he describes, Cancer For Cure could be more at home on this planet than any of his previous efforts.



SIGUR RÓS.

VALTARI.
XL RECORDINGS.

REVIEWER – FRED OXBY.

Sigur Rós have returned, and it has been a long time coming. Back in 2010, rumours circulated that the Icelandic band would be releasing an unnamed follow-up to 2008's **Með suð í eyrum við spilum endalaust**. But the album was not released. Instead, vocalist and guitarist Jónsi announced that he was going to spend more time on his solo project, leaving hopes of new material looking thin. Fortunately, this hiatus has been short lived and Sigur Rós return with **Valtari**, their sixth studio project.

It seems that early rumours that the band have moved towards a more ambient sound are true. The music has taken on an even more minimal feel than previous recordings. There is a more prominent electronic element to the mix, with field recordings and reverbed chips and chirps flooding the background. The rhythm section is still occasionally present, accompanying soaring vocals and rich textures without ever moving to the fore.

There are a number of stand-out moments which I could discuss in detail here, but what struck me most is that this release is more suited to being heard as one long piece of music than as individual tracks. In fact, it is more monochrome than other Sigur Rós records, because there is much less variety than before. Songs don't really build up to a crescendo in the way they used to, which is slightly disappointing because Valtari sometimes lacks the grit that a solid bit of percussion can offer.

But as usual, the band weave a rich tapestry of sounds that is well worth listening to. Jónsi's style as a vocalist and guitarist, playing his instrument with a bow while singing lyricless melodies, has a tremendously wide sound which adds depth and hypnotic melody. Organs and pianos accompany with saturated harmonies to create what is still undoubtedly one of the most recognisable sounds in so-called post-rock music. It's epic, and only seldomly crosses over into cheese.

I still feel genuine emotion in this music and that gives me reason enough to like it. While Sigur Rós have progressed towards a different style of composition, it is undoubtedly the Sigur Rós we know and love, making Valtari a most worthwhile listen.



PAUL LITTLEWOOD.

BUTTERFLY HOUSE.
THREE SIXTY RECORDS.

REVIEWER – PAUL ROBSON.

Paul Littlewood has recorded an EP that flutters in and out of the subconscious. **Butterfly House** won't bring the place down with an earth-shattering guitar riff or a foot-stomping groove. It will, however, ease its way into the listener's psyche. His music is reminiscent of **Spirit Of Eden** and **Laughing Stock** by Talk Talk in its use of repeated guitar patterns, subtle ambient textures and raw vocals. This is best heard late into the small hours or through headphones for greatest effect. Short pauses in sound become just as important for enhancing emotion.

Butterfly House is very much a solo venture, with one or two guitars accompanying Paul's voice. It utilises few studio effects and has little production wizardry. There are fleeting moments of electronic glitches or faint passages of guitar feedback, namely on 'Blindfold' and 'Citadel', but he has layered these sounds carefully so as not to detract from the recording. The sparse use of effects is evocative and otherworldly in its execution.

The EP opens with 'State Of Mind'. A faint guitar line slowly increases in volume before melding with a skittery percussive pattern. Paul's haunting vocals then emerge, supported by a deep bass. His voice sounds fragile, like he is almost on the verge of breaking into tears. On the final track, 'Falling Rocks', he utters the lyrics in a hushed tone before gently whining. Words seem to become redundant in conveying the exact emotion. This dynamic gives the record an edge that prevents it from being overly melodramatic.

It may well be sombre and cerebral, but this doesn't mean that it is mere background music. There is an air of unease that fluctuates throughout each composition, as expressed with the line: 'Lost at sea / it ain't easy,' from 'Daylight'. Paul Littlewood confronts human sadness in an unassuming manner and allows the listener time to absorb its meaning. Some of the songs can meander. The performance is continually heightened, but it soon fades before reaching its final destination. This is a problem because the audience never gets a sense of overall release after the successive build-up, but what Paul Littlewood has achieved is making poignant and ethereal blues music.



DROPS.

BELIEVE YOU ME.
HEAT DEATH RECORDS.

REVIEWER – JOE DAVIS.

Sheffield is no longer the city that inspired acts like The Human League through its turbulent political history; these days it is more often a playground of students who spend their time pondering metaphysics.

That sense of exploration is no more apparent than on Drops' debut EP **Believe You Me**. A literal one-man band, Drops is an acoustic project by local artist Liam Hennessy. Liam produces his music completely from scratch, writing, recording and producing every track from his bedroom. In this way, Believe You Me seems to be Liam Hennessy's take on the world around us.

The EP opens with 'You Have My Word'. A relaxed opener, the track begins with light drums and an addictive guitar riff drifting over your ears right from the get go, lulling you into a peaceful haze. As the track plays on, a clapping beat is introduced and a tinkle of key come into play, lifting you into the playfully fun space of the Drops experience. By the end of the track your worries have been washed away by the trill of the acoustic guitar.

The journey from the centre of reality gains speed with second track 'Star Map'. The tempo speeds up, with a heavier drumbeat and a more pronounced guitar strain hitting the backs of your ear drums. The experience of the music intensifies, resembling an acoustic interpretation of electronic music, sending you drifting through the world of the mind, bouncing from star to star. At which point you fall back down to earth with 'Autumn Walks'. The stuttered nature of the synthetic loop that runs through this track allows you to take stock of everything you've discovered.

This leads to closer 'Return Stones into Sea'. A heady clap, strong beat and light tune, along with an incessant chant that seems almost ritualistic, this song sees Liam saying goodbye to what he knew before he began this journey. And that's what this EP is - a journey. Liam Hennessy, using only the instruments at his disposal and the contours of his mind, takes his listener through the vast realms of human experience.



HIGH TECH SOUL.

TRANSATLANTIC INDUSTRY.
FEATURE BY ALEX KEEGAN.

Techno always used to puzzle my former self. How could millions across the world be entranced by what is essentially a straight 4/4 beat repeated into eternity? That coupled with the clichéd image of a hedonistic German man pumping his fist in the air with unbridled enthusiasm left me wondering what all the fuss was about.

Recent years have led me on a journey through music – electronic in particular – that has resulted in a stream of ever-enlightening discoveries. Sun Ra has convinced me that space is indeed very much the place and bands like Zs and Can showed me the sonic potentialities of an often uninspiring conventional rock set-up. However, maybe the most profound change concerns the genre that I could never get my head around – techno. Whilst the oft-familiar sight of a partying European isn't too far-fetched – Germany is of course one of Techno's greatest producers – the story of the genre's rise to prominence is much more ideologically substantial.

The development of the techno sound can be almost entirely attributed to one man – Juan Atkins. As a young music enthusiast living in the suburbs of Detroit, Atkins was exposed to copious amounts of proto-electronic sounds. Radio DJ The Electrifyin' Mojo is almost solely responsible for this exposure, providing the whole of Detroit's white and black youth with a soundtrack to their weekends. He seamlessly blended the mechanical sounds which were being produced due to the advent of synthesisers by the likes of Kraftwerk and Yellow Magic Orchestra with the interplanetary funk frequencies of George Clinton and Prince. Mojo provided a musical collage that was so interracial through its blurring of the lines between white and black music that he managed to create an audience that was free from many of the racist undertones seen in previous decades. For Atkins, it was this mix of futuristic technology and soul that formed the conceptual basis for his music and, spurred on by the futurist writings of Alvin Toffler, he started producing electronic sounds with friend Rik Davis under the moniker of Cybotron. During this time, he worked constantly with school friends Derrick May and Kevin Saunderson, teaching them the basics of music production and DJing and they soon became the vanguard for this new electronic music, which we now know as techno.

The sound itself was one that was clearly a product of Mojo's audio cocktail – the industrial mechanics of Kraftwerk permeating through a layer of synth chords and funky basslines, reflecting the soul of black American music. This along with the clear influence of Chicago House with its repetition and gradual development of melodic themes meant the genre was clearly a sound of its own. However, what made techno special was its ability to translate the sound of Detroit as a city. As a former industrial giant, the monotony and repetition of the factory lines was a constant soundtrack to most working class families whose members would be working in the industry on a daily basis. Most think of the sound of early techno as being an ode to this lifestyle – a nostalgic reminiscing of the industrial glory days through the replication of the sounds of the motor factories. However, this views the industrial days with a sense of naïve nostalgia, which fails to account for the conditions of the working man at the time.

A similar if smaller scale techno development was happening in the latter years of Detroit's rise to prominence much closer to home. Here in the Steel City – a name of course also attributed because of the city's industrial history – early synthesisers were making waves thanks to the likes of Cabaret Voltaire and The Human League. These sounds were mechanical and cold, undoubtedly a reflection of the city's factories and steel works. In the late 80s, as sounds from the US started infiltrating the North's clubs, the imported Chicago House approaches were being fused with the already-established Sheffield 'industrial' sound. At the helm of this innovation were the trio Forgemasters, consisting of production whiz Rob Gordon – a man responsible for honing the sound of many of Sheffield's finest musical stars at the time as well as being one of the co-founders of Warp Records – DJ Winston Hazel and friend Sean Maher. Hazel was renowned in Sheffield for his beloved club night Jive Turkey, which united races in a similar way to what the Electrifyin' Mojo had done a decade earlier in Detroit.

This group's output, whilst limited, formulated a new and wholly electronic sound for Sheffield, and their first release 'Track with No Name' also happened to be the debut release on Warp Records. I caught up with Gordon and Hazel in April to learn more.

Rob explained the atmosphere of Sheffield at the time as being: 'hard, cold, broke, aggressive. There was a lot of tension, a lot of anger and everything was just hard. Not much changed, so you get this sort of repetitive nature of stuff just going on and on and on. If you listened to the Detroit music at the time, it had the same atmosphere - it was the hardness. They were talking about the same things in their lives even if it was just through music. Musically, we were illustrating similar surroundings.'

The hardness of Sheffield at the time unconsciously fed into their productions, which fused the house music sounds that took up a significant place in Winston's DJ sets with Gordon's passion for reggae and the soundsystem culture it entailed. Prioritising bass and a diverse range of audio frequencies, Gordon brought a new perspective to the house template, which he felt 'sounded like someone was doing it on cassette at home'. His motivations during production were clear: 'the drums on 'Track with No Name' were the same drums I had played for a reggae band years earlier - like this dub sort of stuff. It's following the same kind of patterns if you listen to it. I thought: 'Oh you could put a beat like this because at the end of the day if I heard a house record with a reggae beat like this, I'd think it was good.' Gordon's hostility to house sounds allowed the group to freely traverse the tedious genre stylings that he felt many of the US imports exhibited. Once again the fusion of black soul music - this time with a distinctly Afro-Caribbean tint - with repetitive house progressions occurred to produce a sound that distinctly exhibited the essence of its industrial birthplace.

'One of the sonic things in Sheffield that's a subliminal baptism of techno fire was in the foundries, they used to have these massive hydraulic hammers and because they were only in the Don Valley, the sound used to ricochet up the valley and hit all the hills and then dissipate out so you had this amazing sonic experience. It happened in the morning, in the afternoon and at night. It reverberated to a point where it affected the air presence in the city. You could feel the pressure change and depending where you were you could even feel it in the ground. These were incredible sonic experiences growing up as a child. We were completely oblivious to it until we listened back to the music we produced and thought: 'Oh my god, that's why everything was so clonky and bassy.' It had a massive effect on how electronic music developed in Sheffield.'

The music that Forgemasters and co produced quickly became labeled 'bleep techno' with a sound that distinctly reflected the city's industrial landscape. Warp went on to replicate further successes with the curation of all kinds of electronic music, but it is these roots – an identity, which for many, especially Gordon, was distinctly black in origin – that many hold closest to their hearts. A fortunate by-product of the once flourishing but now disappeared times of industrial splendour, techno endures as a testament to the way in which the world affects human expression.



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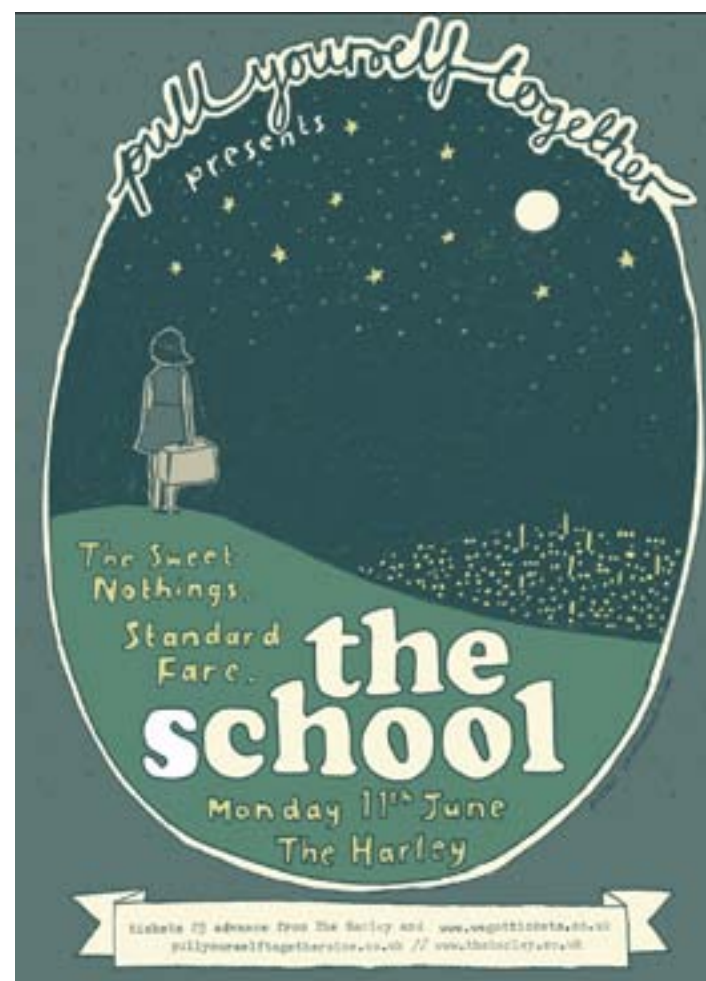
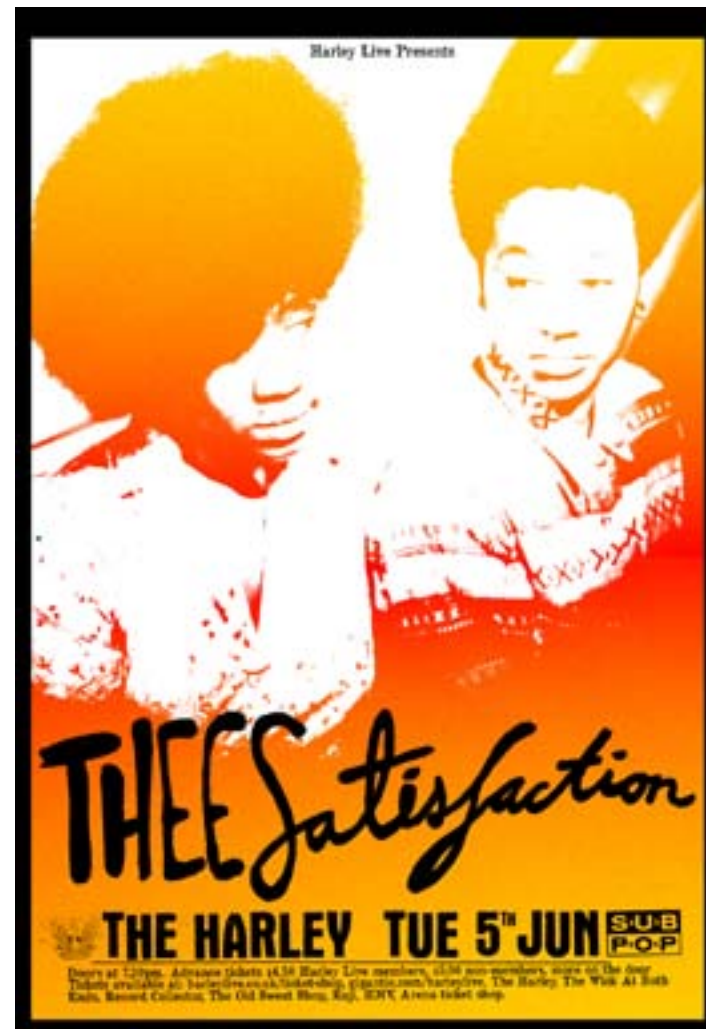
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FILMREEL.

REALISM.

ON THE MATTER OF REALISM.

JOÃO PAULO SIMÕES.

Realism in film is overrated. This has been my firm belief for quite some time. Since way before I started making films, in fact. What started as a personal inclination became a predilection in the choice of films to watch and finally a cornerstone in the design of my own fictional output.

This is not to say that I favour fantasy, horror or sci-fi over a good, solid flick featuring real human beings, dealing with realistic issues within a recognisable world. I'm often happy with minimalistic tales which present their content on a smaller scale – so long, for instance, as the implications to the characters are varied and the mood is carefully crafted through the available cinematic devices.

My point is that the tendency (of both filmmakers and audiences) to judge a film by 'real life' standards is the most limiting, narrow-minded approach I can think of.

Every artform should claim the right to expand itself; to enhance aspects of its own anatomy to deliver, at the very least, a pleasurable challenge. To suppress cinematic techniques in favour of comfortable realism in accordance with expectations is reductive and a little ridiculous.

The symptom becomes more acute if you add the prefix 'socio' to the term 'realism'. There is something utterly unimaginative about the way the trend developed and took shape.

If, to begin with, an assertion of national pride and identity may have had a place after a crippling World War II, to continue to pursue an approach that is light years from expressing the full potential of the artform is plain vanity. The constant, ongoing regurgitation of issues that highlight 'who we are' and 'where we belong' - without elevating the form to greater levels of artistic expression - is a tedious 'marking of territory'.

Those who abide to such a narrow standard, blindly defending the usual conventional view that 'story comes first', should watch the work of Pier Paolo Pasolini, a true filmmaker who took his first creative steps as a man of words before entering and redefining cinema. His use of real circumstances and non-actors in his fictional work would humble any current practioners of socio-realism that may have a hint of genuine film understanding in them. In essence, Pasolini understood that, like poetry, the formulation of film is internal and not a reiteration of established values and formulas.

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PIER PAOLO PASOLINI.

ESPEN BALE.

This year marks what would have been the 90th birthday of Italian filmmaker, poet, writer and political, social and cultural commentator Pier Paolo Pasolini. Growing up against the backdrop of Fascism in the north-eastern area of Friuli, Pasolini found his escape in poetry, writing his first poem aged seven. After school, the loss of his younger brother and expulsion from both the Italian Communist Party and his local community, Pasolini ended up in Rome, in the infamous borgate (slums). There, he befriended Attilio Bertolucci, father of director Bernardo Bertolucci, who not only helped publish his first novel, but also introduced him to the film business.

As a writer who knew Rome's slums, Pasolini was asked to work on the dialogue for the street scenes in Federico Fellini's **Nights of Cabiria** (1957). However, a life in the margins of the film world was not enough and in 1961 he made his directorial début with **Accattone**. The film, based on his novel, was a revelation. It utilised the basic language of Italian cinema of the day, neorealism, and yet was imbued with a poetic beauty and moral ambivalence that was completely fresh.

Mamma Roma (1962) ensued – with an acclaimed performance by Anna Magnani. The violent intensity (and intense violence) of the lives of its characters was again beautifully balanced with a poetic sensibility and incredible eye for simultaneously simple, yet intensely affecting and infinitely complex imagery.

Pasolini's next film would prove to be a masterpiece, and arguably one of the finest ever made.

The Gospel According to Matthew (1964) - which, notably, kept religious affiliation to a minimum by excising the 'St.' - brings a transcendent ambience to the post-neorealist aesthetics of his previous output. The influence of religious iconography had always been evident (in the way he framed pimps, prostitutes and thugs as others painted Christ). Yet, no previous film of his employed it to such an incredible conclusion.

Here was a filmmaker challenging the very foundation of organised Christianity on its doorstep, exposing the teachings of Christ for the egalitarian vision they were, whilst condemning those who allowed social injustice to perpetuate, often under the guise of religious teaching.

For all the potential anger of these films - a common aspect in most politically-motivated realism - there is a sublime beauty inherent in Pasolini's work. The exception could perhaps be his other masterpiece - the brutal, shocking and incredibly relevant **Salò or the 120 Days of Sodom** (1975). Its savage depiction of moral and physical debauchery and the unrestrained brutality lingering in humanity, make this, worryingly, his most 'realist' film of all.



THE TSUNAMI AND THE CHERRY BLOSSOM.

(US, 2011)

SHOWROOM, 13TH JUNE, 11AM / 16TH JUNE, 10.30AM

The poetic potential of this Oscar-nominated film makes the revisiting of Japan's ordeal on March 11th last year worth revisiting. "Amidst the apocalyptic landscape (...) the cherry blossoms are blooming (...). Their ability to thrive, even after being submerged in salt water, points the way to the lost victims, giving them the courage to rebuild their lives."

SECTOR ZERO.

(LEBANON, 2011)

SHOWROOM, 13TH JUNE, 4.15PM / 15TH JUNE, 10.30AM

"This stylish and cerebral film takes us deep into one of Lebanon's darkest corners: the derelict neighbourhood of Karantina." Director Nadim Mshlawi employs the specifics of the film's setting to create a case study for Lebanon's troubled cultural identity. The tension between the 'insightful' and the 'impartial' should add a good deal to it.

PLANET OF SNAIL.

(SOUTH KOREA, 2011)

SHOWROOM, 14TH JUNE, 12.45PM

Promising observational feature about an unusual couple's life together – him, a deaf/blind writer; her, a woman afflicted with a spinal deformity which makes her half his height. Their highly-sensory existence is underlined by Director Seungjun Yi's sensuous camera resulting in a life-affirming piece that avoids sentimentality.

STRAIGHT 8.

(UK, 2012)

ARTICLE X, SIDNEY STREET, 16TH JUNE, 2.15PM

As far as experiments go, straight 8's invitation to doc directors from around the world to make a film on a single, hallowed cartridge of Kodak super 8 film is just about as healthy as you can get. No cuts or retakes. Unprocessed and unseen, until screened in premieres such as this one, there's an overall sense of nostalgia about it.

ONES TO WATCH @ DOC/FEST 2012.

For the full Doc/Fest 2012 programme, visit sheffdocfest.com.

SCARLET ROAD.

(AUSTRALIA, 2011)

SHOWROOM, 16TH JUNE, 3.45PM

Revolving around Rachel, a sex worker with half of a client-base made of people with disabilities, and John, whose deteriorating MS left him in a chin-controlled wheelchair, Scarlet Road will challenge audiences' perspectives on sexuality, sex work and the disabled.

GLASTOPIA.

(UK, 2012)

SHOWROOM, 16TH JUNE, 7.45PM

Countercultural goings-on in the periphery of Glastonbury Festival from Director Julien Temple.

"Fuelled by the sights, sounds and music of tomorrow and the insights of the past, Glastopia is thrilling and provocative entertainment for the dangerous crossroads of today."

THE STORY OF FILM: AN ODYSSEY.

(UK, 2011)

ODEON, 17TH JUNE, 9AM

Set to feature prominently in an upcoming Filmreel dedicated to Reviewing The Critics, Mark Cousins's series, which was made over six years, is compulsory viewing. Epic in scale, yet personal in tone, this 900 minute-long reflective cinematic journey is one of the most refreshing on the nature of filmmaking.

LULLABY.

(RUSSIA, 1937)

SHOWROOM, 17TH JUNE, 11AM

One of three Dziga Vertov films showing at the festival, which include the outstanding Man with a Movie Camera (1928). A film about women in the USSR, which he struggled to get made and ended up marking the end of his creative career. Although neglected by western audiences for decades, this is a must-see for those who like their cinema pure and undiluted.

These films will be reviewed by João Paulo Simões in the next Filmreel.



FACT TOTEM.

FACTTOTEM.COM
FACTTOTEMSHEFFIELD@GMAIL.COM

In the face of crackdowns and club fines for fly-posting, alongside prohibitively expensive bill board or JC Decaux poster sites, James Lock and Sara Hill from Opus Independents, Mark Hobson from Corporation and product designer Jonny Douglas are developing a sustainable, ethical alternative exclusively for local independent traders and community groups - an affordable, high-quality poster display cylinder, for rent in areas of high public footfall.

Sheffield is not currently able to offer affordable promotional opportunities to independent promoters, local traders, community groups and charities. Like much of the UK, we have developed an uneven urban landscape where priority is given to multi-national corporate organisations which put very little back into the local economy.

This uneven playing field has caused some individuals and groups to take matters into their own hands and promote themselves in the only way that is both effective and affordable. Namely, they do it themselves using cheaply printed black and white A3 posters.

The majority of posters are stuck to walls, zip tied to lamp posts, or occasionally pasted using glue. The consequence of this is that areas of the city prone to high public footfall are targeted as poster sites, causing a litter problem and a time-consuming inconvenience for street cleaning services. This is fly-posting as we currently know it in Sheffield.

Fact Totem is a local not-for-profit social enterprise, motivated by a desire to provide effective and affordable alternatives to fly-posting. We see the building of city-wide poster cylinders as an opportunity to provide some of the more unique and independent aspects of Sheffield's cultural economy with access to wider promotional tools. We recognise the importance of providing young promoters and smaller venues with a cost-effective method of promoting their activities to the wider public, thus displacing fly-posting as a necessary promotional method.

The prototype cylinder will be placed on Devonshire Green in early July for all to see. We are currently collating a list of supporters from all parts of Sheffield and will be able to offer out some free poster space during the trial period.

We will need all the support possible to get this project off the ground, so if you are interested in finding out more please contact James on facttotemsheffield@gmail.com

ART IN THE PARK.

ARTINTHEPARK.ORG.UK

Art in the Park is a community art charity based in Sheffield. They work with professional artists and writers to provide all sorts of environmental, creative and community art across the city, in communities that wouldn't otherwise have access to this type of activity. Their work includes running after school art and poetry clubs, informal adult learning, art activities in parks at summer events, and consulting the community about what they want in their local area.

Working in partnership with The University of Sheffield, Art in the Park has delivered a series of workshops with older people, long-term NHS service users and young people out of education, employment and training. The project aimed to give people who might not otherwise have experience of Shakespeare's work the opportunity to form a view on it. Working with visual artists and writers gave an experience of interdisciplinary creative processes and allowed the groups to generate unique local perspectives on the work.

Writers and artists worked with the groups to explore sonnets selected for their strong visual images. Then participants had access to various media, such as painting, textiles and mask making, to develop artwork which responds to these images. Finally, sound recordings have been made by the participants, working with music technology students from Doncaster University Centre. The work produced will be curated as a public exhibition of words, sound and artwork in the foyer of the Jessop West building (opposite the Henderson's Relish factory, near the Sheffield University tram stop). The exhibition opening will take place on Friday 8th June, 5.30pm-7.30pm, and it will then be open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday from 12th to 21st June.

A follow-up project based around the sonnets will take place in late September as part of Sheffield University's Festival of the Mind, involving several open access workshops in a local green space and an outdoor exhibition of work from both phases of the project.

Art in the Park has a diverse range of other projects coming up from September onwards, including free adult art classes in the East Peak area, a party in the park in Nether Edge and a village fête on the Moor on 16th September. Visit artinthepark.org.uk for more information, or contact Cassie regarding volunteering and internship opportunities on cassie@artinthepark.org.uk or call 0114 268 6813.

FAVOURITES.

OUR PICK OF THE BUNCH.

KUJI.

KUJISHOP.CO.UK

After years of successful trading in its swish spot on Eccy Rd, at the end of this month Kuji are taking the step of becoming an exclusively online entity. Although many fans of this excellent emporium of aceness will be sad to see its doors close, it should be made very clear that they are taking this decision with the best of intentions and you lot firmly in mind.

In a world of eBay, Big Cartel, Asos and the like, having a physical shop is becoming something of a rarity and, in some cases, an unnecessary and expensive luxury. All of Kuji's gorgeous, locally produced wares can still be found on their brilliant new website, with special offers including 25% off your next order when you register with them for free. No rent, better prices. Everyone wins.

SHEFTIVAL.

4TH & 5TH AUGUST.
DON VALLEY BOWL.

Those of you with your ears to the ground will have heard the rumblings of the latest addition to Sheffield's summer festivities, Sheftival. Hosted by Sheffield International Venues (SIV), Sheftival is a not-for-profit festival for sport and culture and is well timed over the Olympic weekend of the 4th and 5th August.

Aimed primarily at families and young people but offering something for everyone, Sheftival will host a variety of community sports events beginning on the Friday, as well as carnival parades, Olympic screenings and a live music program curated by Tramlines, Real Radio and JuJu club. There will also be a plethora of local craft and food stalls dotted around, serving the varied culinary delights of the city, including (among many others) the hugely popular Jamaican jerk chicken. Enjoy!

RAT RACE BASECAMP 2012.

6TH-8TH JULY.
GRAVES PARK.

Rat Race Basecamp is brought to you by Rat Race Adventure Sports in conjunction with Cliffhanger 2012, one of Sheffield's biggest adventure sports events. Running at the same time as Cliffhanger, Basecamp offers visitors that little bit extra. For £60, you can gain access to both days of Cliffhanger - including casual and competition climbing, caving, biking, workshops, demonstrations, stalls and more - on top of an additional 5km run in the woods, a 50km sportive cycle ride, camping, and two nights of live music by the likes of Ellen and the Escapades, the Ratells, Fossil Collective and the Northern Generals.

As if that wasn't enough, there will also be a real ale tent, on-site catering, hot showers and communal BBQs for general use. Can't say fairer than that.

DARK MOUNTAIN.

DARK-MOUNTAIN.NET
INDIEGOGO.COM/DARK-MOUNTAIN-ISSUE-3

Usually, the term 'uncivilised' is used negatively, but in the case of the Dark Mountain Project it couldn't be more fitting. In short, Dark Mountain encourages works of art that look past the stories civilisation tells itself. Its manifesto accepts ecological, social and political collapse as inevitable, and argues that we should embrace and learn to deal with this, rather than denying it.

The project is currently putting together its third book of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, interviews, photo essays and paintings, as well as a specially commissioned front cover by Now Then designer Jones. You can learn more about what Dark Mountain does on the website, or make a donation towards the production of book #3 on the Indiegogo link above.

SHEFFIELD GREEN FAIR.

30TH JUNE.
ST MARY'S CENTRE, BRAMALL LANE.

The 27th annual Sheffield Green Fair is in the pipeline, once again gathering all things environmental in one place. Complete with 70 stalls from all manner of green businesses in Sheffield and South Yorkshire, as well as live music, entertainers, children's play area, yoga, massage, meditation, bike repairs, vintage fair, wholefood cafe and beer tent, this should be a great community event with fun for all the family.

It runs from 11am to 5pm and costs just one of your English pounds to get in. Find out more about the schedule closer to the time by visiting sheffieldgreenfair.org.uk. If you are interested in hosting a stall, sponsoring the event or advertising in the programme, visit the site and click on 'How to get involved'.

ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR.

23RD JUNE. BANK STREET ARTS.
SHEFFIELDBOOKFAIR.ORG.UK

This year's Anarchist Bookfair will take place on 23rd June at Bank Street Arts. Similar bookfairs take place all over the world, the aim being to spread the word about anarchism and dispel the numerous myths that surround it. The Sheffield event is a great starting point for learning about activism, ethics and the history of the movement.

There will be stalls, talks and panel discussions on topics of global significance, including Greece and the Eurozone crisis, small town activism and community responses to austerity, as well as displays of comics, zines, films and art. Food will also be available.

The event will run from 10am to 6pm and all are welcome, whether you consider yourself an anarchist or are just interested to learn more.

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